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"Reviews and Information for the Anime Gourmet!"

9/27/1988

This is the 8th in a series of files of comments and reviews of anime (Japanese animation) items that we have bought. Please direct all comments to us by E-mail or post us a message in the Forum. We also welcome any reviews or comments you would like to have included in the next ANIME STUFF article. Also, please send us any comments about any incorrect information contained here. A correction will be placed in the next ANIME STUFF.

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////////////////////////QUICK NOTE\\

For the best in on-line anime chatter, be sure and check out Takayuki Karahashi's VALLEY OF THE WIND BBS, the official ANIMAG BBS. It is certainly one of the best anime BBSs around.

Give it a call at 1-415-341-5986. (It's located in California...)

////////////////////////GRAPHICS NOTES\\

Once again this issue takes advantage of CompuServe's GIF graphics format to provide illustrations for this issue. Be sure to download and view files AS8G1.GIF to AS8G10.GIF.

Files AS8G2.GIF to AS8G5.GIF feature graphics from rare test footage created for Cream Lemon Part 4 : Pop*Chaser. Files AS8G6.GIF through AS8G10.GIF feature graphics from the ICZER-1 OAV series. And of

course, file AS8G1.GIF is the GIF graphic "cover" for this issue of ANIME STUFF. Enjoy!

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COMPACT DISC VIDEO (CDV) : IT JUST MIGHT HIT...WITH ANIME FANS

The consumer doesn't really know much about it yet. Critics say it won't fly because it's too expensive for its teen target market. And I thought it was impossible to really do much with it as a format. Just what is Compact Disc Video, and how will it fit into the now united Compact Disc/Laser Video Disc family? Well, after some firsthand experience with this new LaserDisc/Compact Disc hybrid, I must say that I'm very impressed with this new format.

This past summer I received some of my first Compact Disc Videos (AKA CDVs...). And before I go on about how neat I think they are, perhaps a little explanation about what CDVs are is needed.

The marriage of LaserVision video discs to the compact digital audio disc has spawned its first software hybrid, the Compact Disc Video. The CDV is actually pretty much the equivalent to a compact disc single (CD3) with 5 minutes of a laser video disc attached to it. The format is built around a disc that is the exact same size as a standard CD, but it has been colored gold to set it apart from the rest of the CD audio format. The disc provides for 20 minutes of digital audio on its inner tracks, and 5 minutes of video with a digital audio soundtrack on the remaining outer part of the disc. The first 20 minutes of digital audio on the disc can be played on any CD player, but the rest of the disc must be played on a CD or Laser Video Disc player that has CDV compatibility. (All current laser video disc players that can play CDs now also have CDV capability.)

The format was designed to achieve to goals. First, to provide an inexpensive way to sell music videos, and thus recover more of their production costs. And second, by providing an inexpensive way to sell the videos it is hoped that this will pull more teens and young adults into the CD and home video hardware and software markets. The discs are only supposed to sell for about \$9. Critics argue that this is silly since how many teens have enough money to throw at a \$600 to \$1000 dollar

laserdisc player to play them on?

Well, it's still too far too early to judge the viability of the format. It has only been available in Japan since the beginning of the year, and was just introduced in the US in July. (Even though the hardware to play them on has been available for over a year now in the form of the "Combi" laserdisc players that play CDs, CDVs, and LDs.)

So, what does all this have to do with anime? Well, if you recall in ANIME STUFF 6 I felt that CDV might be an interesting and inexpensive way to collect or preview a bit of an anime program without having to plunk down the money for a full CD, tape, or disc of the show. And yes, the first few anime CDVs have been released...and they really are a pretty nifty way to collect an audio/visual souvenir of your favorite anime.

So far, I have collected 2 anime CDVs and 1 pop CDV from Japan. (The pop music CDV is Ryuichi Sakamoto's RISKY CDV.) I must admit, I was a bit skeptical about the format at first. I didn't think that there was much that one could do to effectively fill 5 minutes to represent an anime show. And would the video quality suffer due to the size of the smaller discs? I was wrong on both counts. The directors and editors of the 3 discs I have seen so far make the most of the 5 minutes. And the picture quality is flawless. It rivals some of the best LDs I have seen. Really!

I hope the format finds its niche in the US. But I know that for the Japanese, CDV is just too cute to fail. (grin)

- Tom Mitchell

SAINT SEIYA CDV (COLUMBIA 24AV-3002)

To my knowledge, this was the first anime CDV to be released. And if you need a memento to remember this show with, then this is as probably as good an item to get as any. The audio portions of this disc contain 4 excellent rock ballads and instrumentals from the first season of the show. The songs are PEGASUS FANTASY, FRIENDS IN THE SKY, WE'RE FEARLESS WARRIORS, & BLUE FOREVER. The video portion is used for a 5 minute music video-style collection of best scenes from the show set to the song ATHENA'S LULLABY, a lovely pop ballad with some rather uplifting and powerful instrumental arrangements.

The director and editors of the the video do a pretty darn good job in trying to convey the strong emotional triumph and tragedy theme of the show by presenting the characters in all their armoured glory...and then

showing them bloody with the pain of their magical combat. Most all of the major characters are featured throughout.

This CDV is highly recommended for the Saint Seiya fan. For me, it was my first introduction to this series. And for anyone wishing to sample what the series is like, this disc really brings over the quality and emotion of the show.

- Tom Mitchell

KIMAGURE ORANGE ROAD CDV-1 (TOSHIBA/EMI {TOEMI} VIDEO CTV24-106)

Toshiba/EMI seems to be determined to make Kimagure Orange Road's appearance on home video a special event for fans and collectors. Not only is the whole series being issued over the next year on laser video

disc, but they are also releasing a special series of CDVs that compile

all of the opening and ending credit animations for the show and other short graphic animation.

For the audio part of this CD, 4 hot pop tunes from the show are brought

together. First up is the snazzy NIGHT OF SUMMER SIDE, perhaps one of my

favorite anime pop tunes. Next is the moving and bouncy pop ballad SUMMER MIRAGE, followed by ORANGE MYSTERY, a tune featuring some great rock guitar! And finally, the hard driving rock ballad BREAKING HEART. This show featured some of the best anime music of the year!

The graphics for the show are just as captivating as the music. The opening and closing titles take advantage of a quick cut montage style perfectly suited for the accompanying music. This is the only CDV that I have seen to present more than one graphic sequence in the 5 minutes of video allowed on the format. The first video is the quick cut eye catching opening credit graphic for the show set to the popular NIGHT OF SUMMERSIDE. This is a really stunning opening title sequence! Great editing. Next is the closing credit graphics for the show featuring the beautiful Madoka in many poses watching the credits scroll

by. It should be noted that the text for the credits has been deleted so

that they don't get in the way of the beautiful artwork on both of the opening and closing sequences. Next is a wonderfully animated music video for ORANGE MYSTERY done in pencil test/sketch style. Some really amazing renderings here featuring the main characters from the show

in a rock band playing the ORANGE MYSTERY tune. Finally, the disc ends with a commercial break title card from the show.

This is the best use of the CDV medium I have seen so far. It's so well done, that it'll make you crave to see more of the series. It's small... but it's one of the best videos I have seen all year!

- Tom Mitchell

ICZER-1 SPECIAL VERSION LASER DISC (LP VIDEO L148-9019)

It is her eyes that capture you. Bright and flashing, and changing with every instant, every shift in light and feeling. The windows to an artificial soul...

...Iczer-1.

In 1985 director and character designer Toshihiro Hirano released Iczer-1 Act 1. A science fiction action adventure in which, once again, the Earth is threatened by an alien invasion, and Earth's only hope lies in a strange warrior and her young teen-aged partner. Their adventures are chronicled in three acts, as slowly Earth falls to the deadly alien forces. The trilogy ended in 1987, with, of course, the vanquishing of the beastly enemies, and the restoration of peace to our embattled planet.

A common story, an animation series that has been seen and followed for three years.

The three OAVs stood very well as individual films, and together they told a much grander tale of desire and guilt. Finally, the three tales have been collected, re-edited, and now released as a single Special Edition. The story of Iczer-1 and Nagisa, Big Gold, Cobalt, doomed Sepia, Iczer-2 and Sir Violet can now be told in a single sweeping tale of action and character.

Technically, the retelling of Iczer-1's story is as exciting as the first time.

The film opens now with Sir Violet's awful choice. Between forever traveling the stars with her homeless people, or forcefully taking over a planet, casting out that world's own people. Just as her children, the Cutewolf, were thrown off their own mother world. This re-cutting sets the groundwork of the story at the start, and from this foundation the story grows, much more understandably than when there were three separate films. Also changed from the original videos, is

the inclusion of approximately five minutes of new animation. These brief additions aid not only in the splicing of the three acts, but also serve to further develop the characterizations, most notably that

of Sepia. Hirano's skill at pacing the action, excellent in the three short acts, only becomes more apparent in the special compilation.

The

story builds continuously, and where there are minor high points, the climaxes for each particular act, they do not detract nor hinder the power of the films ending. Hirano has an excellent sense of timing, of when and where to switch scenes. The ability to juxtapose actions to build excitement, without losing the continuity of the story or disorienting the viewer. Hirano also knows when to be graphic and when not to. When Sayochan's mother is taken over by the Bedem, it is never seen or graphically portrayed. Yet it is more eerie and horrifying than any other Bedem capture. Last, the transitions from scene to scene are quick, and natural, and are seldom forced or awkward. As if it was truly one complete film.

The animation is beautiful. But that, too, is part of Iczer-1's three year history. Of all of Hirano's work, Iczer-1 stands out as his best. What the Special Edition allows, however, is the ability to

watch the skill and technique develop over the series. It is rich, and full and detailed, and when compiled, a tour-de-force of not only Hirano's, but Jyunichi Watanabe's monster designs and Hiroaki Motoigi's mechanical design work.

But even with the best direction, and excellent animation, Iczer-1 would still be a plain alien invasion story, albeit a pretty one. However, beneath the action and animation, there is the conflict of desire and conscience, and a theme of compassion which allows Iczer-1 to transcend the simplistic alien invasion genre.

Beneath the well paced action, the conflict is not just a slugfest between Iczer-1 and the Cutewolf/Bedem/Big Gold alliance. The action is the focus not for simple conquest, but a conflict of ethics. Of whether any action can be justified by desperation, irregardless of the consequences to others. It is Sir Violet's torn battle, between invading and taking over the Earth, or dooming her own people to even longer exile from a homeworld. Big Gold and the Bedem are the incarnation of her desperate desire, a wish for a mother world at all cost, uncaring of whom they must destroy in that process. And then there is Iczer-1. Sir Violets's conscience. The realization

that the end does not justify the means, that there are some things which are wrong to do, despite how desperate the circumstances are. It is this conflict, between desire and conscience, which is the framework and foundation of the OAV.

And Sir Violet's desire is strong, very strong. And yet it crumbles before the power of Kanoh Nagisa. In the end, it is not super mecha that triumphs, nor new technology, nor discovery, nor force of fist or fury. Indeed, as shown over and over again, the Cutowolf have the biggest and best of all equipment. Nagisa's power is so very simple. She cares. It is compassion. More powerful than any technology or simple obsessive force, the ability to care for those around you has far greater power. And if Nagisa is special, it is because she has the ability to care very deeply and strongly. Compassion is the downfall of the Cutowolf invasion: Sir Violet's compels her to create Iczer-1, it is Sepia's compassion that dooms Iczer-Sigma, and Iczer-1's final understanding of what it is to care that gives her the strength to defeat Big Gold. Nagisa showed an artificial creation what it is to care. Gave her a human heart. You can see it in Iczer-1's eyes; the caring, the worry, the compassion.

Desire. Conscience. And compassion. Three simple words, three complex emotional drives. It is this conflict which allows Iczer-1 to transcend being a simple action film.

And this underlying story is all the more powerful in the Special Edition. When released as three separate acts, the first two videos stood very well as simple science fiction action stories. It was not until the release of Act 3 that the underlying themes were truly brought out, to bring the OAV series to a powerful close. The Special Edition, with the initial re-cutting, the added animation, and the fact that there is now a continuous story, better handles the development of the background framework and the development of the major themes.

The Special Edition is not perfect, however. It has one flaw. The new animation is easy to pick out. And it has the same slickness which marred the animation of Dangaioh. All the hair and lips have the same clean and polished reflections. And this difference is very apparent when next to the rich animation of the original video.

The laser disc set is impressive. It is a two disc set, packaged in a fold out jacket. The jacket is rich with stills from the video, but the true value of the set is contained within the encoding of the discs. The reason is three very simple letters: CAV. The ability to freeze the action only shows how good and detailed the animation is. If one truly wishes to study Hirano at his best, this CAV disc set is imperative. If there is any problem with the discs, it is an annoying and now unavoidable problem. The transfer of Act 1 to disc was less

than perfect. The original master tape must have been old or dusty, and these streaks become apparent in the darker backgrounds or large fields of color. Luckily, this is only a problem on one side of one disc.

The remainder of the tape to disc transfer is remarkably clean. Flipping the CAV discs is a problem inherent to the media, but the side separations have been well placed and well handled. The change between sides two and three come as a surprise, however. But it is a happy surprise, for it allows the battle between Iczer-Robo and Iczer-Sigma to continue uninterrupted by the old cliffhanger break between Acts 2 and 3.

In the end, the depth of the story can be told in a pair of beautiful red eyes.

Within them can be found determination and love, surprise and anger, desperation and caring, and last, a loss that will haunt long after the phosphor dot reality has faded away.

- Mike Naylor

CREAM LEMON SPECIAL - DARK ON LASERDISC (ARISU VIDEO 78AX-5)

Cream Lemon meets gothic horror in this special video. Two young men, a Catholic seminary student and a handsome young preppy, spend the night at a dark castle after their car gets clobbered by a tree in a storm. In the castle they run into a lustful demon disguised as a horny young girl, a strange man with an ax, and an innocent young maid, and lots of demonic dolls! Some of the sex scenes are strange and horrific, filled with bloody gore. All in all, this adds up to a lot of campy horror fun with a Cream Lemon twist!

This is by far one of the funniest, strangest, and best directed of any of the Cream Lemon videos. Highly recommended. From what I gather, not a lot of people know about this one since it is not part of the regular Cream Lemon "PART" & "VOLUME" series. It is also on the ARISU label, not Pony Video. The video quality of the laserdisc is excellent, with a great analog stereo soundtrack featuring some spooky original organ music. If you think bible-thumpers had a field day with THE LAST TEMPTATION OF CHRIST, well this would just turn 'em blue with rage.

- Tom Mitchell

MASAKI'S OAV LIST (On Loan from ANIMANGA NUZU)

KYOKO: Onegai...ichinichi de iikara. Atashi yori nagaikishite

Hi! This column originally ran in Animanga Nuzu, the BBS Anime Newsletter.

Unfortunately, AN is down for right now, because its main home, the Silent Running BBS, is under renovation (so to speak). So, right now, due to Tom's good graces, it's running as a guest in Anime Stuff, the CIS Comic Animation Forum Anime Newsletter.

"LookOut!"s this time around go to Makaitoshi and Kikou Ryouhei Mellolink.

For all those of you who liked Yojoyutoshi (known in many translated English titles such as "Devil City", "Demon City", "Beast City", "Supernatural Beast City", etc.), you're in for a treat because the same studio and the same novelist (Hideyuki Kikuchi) is back again for this offering, Makaitoshi. The two stories are very different, however. Makaitoshi is not meant to be a sequel to Yojoyutoshi. Also, for those of you that were Votoms fans and are downcast because the series has ended... well, there's good news! Kikou Ryouhei Mellolink is done by the same staff, same studio, with the same basic premise. The idea here is that Mellolink and Chirico (from Votoms) are in the same universe but fighting in different places. Thus, this new offering from Sunrise can be taken to be another look at the Votoms universe. Great fun for those of you who like "hard" SF stories.

Finally, a few notes about upcoming videos (verified and rumor).

Those of you who read Animag know that Robert Heinlein's "Starship Troopers" is being animated by Sunrise (if you don't read Animag, well, then you should! (grin)). If you check the chart below, the first volume in this series is scheduled to be released in late October. If all goes according to plan, volumes 2 and 3

will be released in November and December, respectively. Being a
 crazed
 BubbleGum Crisis and Gall Force fan, I would heartily recommend that
 people
 take a look at the upcoming offerings from those two series. BGC4 is
 sort of
 a variation on "Christine". A car becomes slowly sentient and does
 nasty
 things.... Gall Force 3: StarDust War will supposedly be the last
 chapter in
 this series. The Paranoid and the Solenoid fleets are supposed to
 meet in a
 last blazing gunfight at the OK Corra... whoops, I mean, the Sigma-N
 solar
 system. It will be interesting to see how this one turns out.
 And that's it for this episode of my list. Take care and I'll see you
 around! (where? I don't know....)

(Legend: Figures with "p" next to them mean "projected". That figure
 is not
 final. Figures with "u" or "u" by itself means "unknown". That
 figure has
 not yet been decided. All prices are in yen and are for the tape
 version.
 Names that are all in CAPS mean that that name is presently being used
 until a
 final name is decided. All translated names are approximations...
 please do
 not nitpick.)

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NAME	TRANSLATED NAME	RELEASE DATE
PRICE	TIME	
!=====!		
=====!		
!Eesu o Nerae! 2 - VOL.1	!Aim For the Ace! 2 - VOL. 1	!released!
12800 ! 75 !		
!Kyuuketsuhime Miyu	!Vampire Princess Miyu	!released!
5500 ! 30 !		
!Tooyamazakura Uchuujoyou	!His Name is Gold	!released!
12800 ! 60 !		
! -Yatsu no nawa		
Goorudo!	!	!
!Shounan Bakusouzoku 4	!Shonan Bakusouzoku 4	!released!
12800 ! 50 !		
!Howatsu Maikeru? 2	!What's Michael? 2	!released!
9800 ! 45 !		
!Watto-po to bokura no	!The Story of Watto-po and Us	!released!
12800 ! 50 !		

!			
!Ohanashi	!	!	!
!			
!BaburuGamu Kuraishisu 4	!BubbleGum Crisis 4		!released!
8800 ! 40 !			
!Kizuoibito VOL. 5 -	!Kizuoibito VOL. 5 - Final		!08/25/88!
9800 ! 46 !			
! Fainaru Tatchidaaun	!		
Touchdown	!	!	!
!Piihyoroo ka 1	!The Family of Piihyoroo 1		!09/01/88!
8800 ! 30 !			
!Galu Foosu 3	!Gall Force 3 - StarDust War		!11/01/88!
11800 ! 60 !			
!Makaitoshi (Shinjyuku)	!Demon World City (Shinjuku)		!Autumn p!
14800 ! 80 !			
!Yooseioo	!King Fairy		! u !
11800 ! 60 !			
!Kaze o Nuke!	!Outrun the Wind!		!11/88 p !
12800 ! 50 !			
!Toppu o Nerae! VOL. 1	!Go for the Top! VOL. 1		!10/07/88!
10800 ! 60 !			
!Uchyuu no Senshi Vol. 1	!Starship Troopers Vol. 1		!10/25/88!
12800 ! 50 !			
!Namakemono ga Miteta	!The Lazy Thing was Watching		!09/23/88!
9800 ! 30 !			
!Youtouden III	!Yotoden III		!10/88 p !
9800 ! 45 !			
!Kidoo Keisatsu	!MechPolice Patlabor Vol. 4		!09/25/88!
4800 ! 30 !			
! Patoleibaa Vol.			
4 !	!	!	!
!Uchyuu Kazoku	!Space Family Carbinson		!12/88 p !
u ! 45 !			
!			
Kaarubinson	!	!	!
!			
!Kikou Ryouhei	!Armored Soldier Mellolink VOL 1		!10/21/88!
u ! 50 !			
! Meloulinku VOL			
1 !	!	!	!
!Seisenshi Dunbine 3	!Aura Battler Dunbine 3		!08/25/88!
12800 ! 75p!			
!Hajya Taisei Dangaioh 2	!Dangaioh 2		!10/88 p !
u ! 45p!			
!Maryuu Senki 2	!Maryuu Senki 2		!nextyear!
9500p! 30p!			
!BAIOLENSU JAKKU	!VIOLENCE JACK		! u !
u ! u !			
!Leina Kenroudensetsu 2	!Reina Wolf Sword Legend 2		!09/04 p !
7800 ! 30 !			

!DOUYOU ANIME 1	!NURSERY SONG ANIME 1	!11/88 p !
3500 ! u !		
!Ichi Pondo no Fukuin	!The One Pound Gospel	!12/02/88!
9800 ! 50 !		
!Kaze no Matasaburou	!Matasaburo of the Wind	!08/20/88!
7800 ! 30 !		
!Nihon no Obakebanashi	!Japanese Ghost Stories 1	!08/28/88!
4800 ! 30 !		
!Kuriimu Lemon - Ami	!Cream Lemon - Ami After Then	!09/21/88!
9800 ! 25 !		
! Sorekara Vol. 1	! Vol.	
1	! ! ! !	

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Also, starting from this issue, I will also feature a special column for all you LaserDisc fans out there.... telling of last month's (and maybe some of this month's) anime LD releases. This information is not complete and will only be featured as new information becomes available. No claims are made as to accuracy in this list.

(Legend: "S" stands for Stereo, "M" stands for Mono, "D" stands for Digital Sound, "DS" stands for Dolby Surround, "CAV" stands for Standard Play Disc, and "CLV" stands for Extended Play Disc. Other codes which may or may not be as interesting are: "F" for Dubbed into Japanese discs, "C" for Color, "B" for Black and White, and "N" stands for Bilingual discs.)

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!TITLE	! PRICE	! TIME	! CODES	!
CAT. # !				
!=====!	!=====!	!=====!		
!=====!				
!Zillion - Emi Penguins Diary	! 5800	! 30	!S, D, CLV, C!	
K58L-1020 !				
!Zillion - Master Collection	! 7800	! 48	!S, CAV, C	!
70058-78 !				
!Kimagure Orange Road 4	! 7800	! 98	!M, CLV, C	!
70064-78 !				
!Urusei Yatsura TV Trailer Collection	! 6800	! 72	!M, CLV, C	!
G68X5059 !				
!City Hunter Vols. 1 - 4	! 7800	! 98	!M, CLV, C	!

HCL-3002	!	!	!	!	!
HCL-3003	!	!	!	!	!
HCL-3004	!	!	!	!	!
HCL-3005	!	!	!	!	!
!Aura Battler Dunbine II	!	9800	!	75	!S, CAV,CLV,C!
BELL-179	!	!	!	!	!
!Heidi of the Alps	!	9800	!	103	!M, CLV, C !
BELL-96	!	!	!	!	!
!Mobile Suit SD Gundam	!	7800	!	30	!S, CAV, C !
BEAL-183	!	!	!	!	!
!Akira Production Report	!	4800	!	45	!S, CLV, C !
SF048-1465!	!	!	!	!	!
!Lupin III - The Plot of the Kazama	!	9500	!	73	!S, CLV, C !
TLL2120	!	!	!	!	!
Family	!	!	!	!	!
!Project A-ko 3	!	9800	!	55	!S,D,DS,CAV,C!
G98F-0258	!	!	!	!	!
!Tokyo Vice	!	7800	!	55	!S, D, CAV, C!
W78L1011	!	!	!	!	!
!MechPolice Patlabor Vol. 3	!	4800	!	30	!S, D, CAV, C!
05PL-51	!	!	!	!	!
!Vampire Princess Miyu 1	!	5500	!	30	!S, D, CAV, C!
G55F0259	!	!	!	!	!
!BubbleGum Crisis 4 - Revenge Road	!	8800	!	40	!S, D, CAV, C!
L088-5053	!	!	!	!	!
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(This information comes from the August issue of Animage and the September issue of Anime V)

- Masaki Takai

CREAM LEMON PART 4 : POP*CHASER ON LASERDISC (PONY VIDEO G98F0054)

(Note: This disc also includes Cream Lemon Part 3 : SF Legend Rall)

What can I say? Of all of the CREAM LEMON Original Anime Videos that I have seen so far, this is my all time favorite.

The story is set in some unspecified future in the American west. It centers on a young female mercenary named Rio who rides out of the desert into a town called Neo-Cansas City looking for a place to get a stiff drink and a nights rest. Instead she stumbles into a saloon featuring a crazed bartender who is stuck with having to use a bunch

of rowdy school girls to staff his hotel bar. One of the girls named Mai-chan seems to take an immediate liking to Rio. That night, she manages to trick her way into a surprised Rio's bed where she gives the worldly Rio a satisfying sexual experience like she's never experienced before. The next morning Rio awakes to an explosion, and finds the hotel under attack by a group of hover-bike mercenaries led by the handsome Jack. In just a few minutes his men rampage through the town, stealing supplies and kidnaping the school girls. And of course, Jack takes Rio's new friend Mai.

At Jack's camp, Jack gives Mai the sexual experience of her life! In fact she can't get enough, and starts getting in Jack's way as he has to try to pilot his walking-tank when an angry Rio comes to rescue Mai.

There are several elements that make this erotic comedy action/adventure stand out among all the other Cream Lemon episodes. First of all is the crew of artists that worked on it. This was created by many of the same artists that would later create the classic anime action comedy Project A-Ko. If anyone has a flare for wild action scenes and comedy adventure, these guys do. They are also fantastic artists with a talent for wildly funny body language. They are also great human figure artists. The love scenes between Rio and Mai are fascinating in their daring perspectives. In fact it's amazing to note how all these scenes are handled. This is one of the few Cream Lemons that have absolutely no censoring. Pop*Chaser probably has some of the most beautifully choreographed CL love scenes and yet no genitals are shown. It's handled so skillfully that it took me quite awhile to realize this.

The direction of this OAV features very tight pacing that really keeps the story moving, but not rushed. In fact the love scene with Rio and Mai provides a beautiful breather from the loony bar scenes before it, and a

great contrast for the wild action scenes to come. It's amazing that so many varied scenes were able to be paced so well in just 25 minutes of time. It's also interesting to note that Pop*Chaser is set up as if it were an actual TV series episode with great opening and ending titles, and even intermission graphics for a commercial break. (Too bad it's not a series, this would be hot!)

The action scenes are the best ever featured in a Cream Lemon. Wild mecha designs, blasting weapons and some amazing scene choreography that require to repeat viewing to catch all the action. And the love scenes between Jack and Mai are a riot when the final battle begins! In addition, the film also sports a great rock soundtrack, one of the best of any of the Cream Lemon series. Some of the music from Pop*Chaser also ends up being used in later Cream Lemon episodes.

If you've got to have just one Cream Lemon to round out your collection, get this one. Cream Lemon doesn't get much better than this. In fact most OAVs don't even come close to being this good.

Sequel! Sequel! Hey, a lot of Cream Lemon episodes have had sequels.
Why
not this one?

(Here's a tip for you diehard Pop*Chaser fans: Even if you already have this video, you don't have all the animation that was created for it. The preview trailer for Pop*Chaser features completely original animation that was not used in the OAV! It is shown on the end of Cream Lemon Part 2 : Escalation episode on laserdisc. It's probably on the tape version too.)

- Tom Mitchell

[illegible]

WING OF HONNEAMISE – ROYAL SPACE FORCE ORIGINAL SOUNDTRACK COMPACT DISC

This is by far the most brilliant and varied soundtrack music from any film over the past year. And I would venture to say, one of the best film scores ever. Young composer Ryuichi Sakamoto is going to have one hell of a brilliant musical career during his life time.

The music he composed for the film WING OF HONNEAMISE is hard to describe. Sakamoto is drawing from so much of his varied musical past here that he has managed to blend it all into an exotic and evocative score that is unique in its acoustic texture and range of emotion. The 15 tracks here manage to cover a wide range of dramatic feeling.

Playful

melodies, pompous marches, technopop themes, and tragic arias.

Sakamoto

touches on just about every BGM style you can imagine. And yet despite the variety, it all works as a whole due to his unique world-rhythm aural

signature. This is truly a classic BGM that may just satisfy all BGM lovers and also introduce them to musical styles that many other composers with Pop/Rock backgrounds don't really dare to play with.

If you really enjoyed this album, there are some other works by

Sakamoto

that you might also wish to explore. He just won an Academy Award for Best Original Score for his new soundtrack to THE LAST EMPEROR which he composed with David Byrne of TALKING HEADS fame. His new album called NEO GEO is a great companion work to the HONNEAMISE soundtrack featuring an expanded emphasis on his exotic rock/pop roots. And of course his albums with his former group Yellow Magic Orchestra (YMO) are

also quite popular.

It will be interesting to see where Ryuichi Sakamoto will go from here.

If the Honneamise soundtrack is any indication, he has the talent to become one of this century's finest contemporary composers.

- Tom Mitchell

LAPUTA - THE CASTLE IN THE SKY ORIGINAL SOUNDTRACK ON COMPACT DISC
(ANIMAGE RECORDS 32ATC-115)

Of course, composer Jo Hisaishi is already established as one of the premier BGM composers in Japan. So as one would expect, this is a quality soundtrack. Although, there are some welcome differences between this recording and Hisaishi's two previous anime soundtracks for NAUSICAA, and ARION.

Unlike those two previous films, which were solid adventure films with a lot of tense action, Laputa is much more lighthearted. And it shows in the music as Hisaishi looses up and composes music that paints pictures of comedy, adventure, and blue sky-filled vistas. A nice

change
from some of the close heavy drama music of ARION or NAUSICAA.

But it's not just the compositions themselves that lend to the light feeling of this soundtrack. It's also a departure of sorts as Jo leaves some of his synthesizers behind and chooses instead to work with a full orchestra. Lots of strings and brass.

One other thing I noticed is that music here is much more varied. Mostly due to the fact that the music follows the action of the film very closely. One minute you're listening to peaceful full orchestra painting a wide aural vista of the Skycastle Laputa, and in the next you're being chased by sudden bursts of flighty action music. All without any warning. Makes for some fun listening.

The music aside, the jewel box for the CD also features an interesting cel reproduction of Pazu and Sheeta on the cover. The cel slides away to reveal the CD's booklet serving as the background. Neat.

What can I say. Jo does it again.

– Tom Mitchell

////////////////////////////////////BOOKS AND MAGAZINES\\

THE GREAT ADVENTURES OF DIRTY PAIR (A.K.A.: THE DIRTY PAIR ENGLISH NOVEL)
A NOVEL BY HARUKA TAKACHINO
WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY YOSHIKAZU YASUHIKO
TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH BY DAVID LEWIS
PUBLISHED BY KODANSHA AS PART OF THE KODANSHA ENGLISH LIBRARY (BOOK #30)

For starters, this little paperback book is an absolute must have for the collection of any true Dirty Pair fan. Not only is this a fun story, but the novel also serves as an important reference work that will provide many clues into the origin of the Dirty Pair...er...Lovely Angels.

Reading it, you will learn such things as where the Lovely Angels are from, how they met, and where they got their pet "cat" Mugi. You will also learn more about their employer, the WWWA. And of course, important facts are revealed about the uniforms that Kei and Yuri wear.

perspective

original

background.

Pair

– Tom Mitchell

//////////////////////////////////ANIME MODEL KITS\\

LUM FROM URUSEI YATSURA KIT (Tsukuda Hobby Jumbo Figure Series No.7)

Before getting into the actual review, a word of thanks to Ray Pelzer is in order for his finding this kit and actually parting with it for cash! If any of you actually run across this one, grab it, because it'll probably never cross your path a second time.

As with the Oneamis capsule review, I'll start with the box.

The first peek inside yielded a quick count of 12 parts total.

Two of them had little to do with Lum herself, the base plate and a little figure of her cousin Ten looking extremely surprised. Okay, I

thought, this is going to be easy. A little glue, a little putty, a little careful painting, right?

Forget it. The figures in this series are molded in a very tough, very smooth vinyl compound, totally unlike the more brittle resin-and-filler kits or easily-worked styrene plastic kits we all know and love. The difficulty in working this stuff can be likened to working with mozzarella cheese cooled to approximately absolute zero. The surface gives a bit under a virgin X-acto blade, but grudgingly so, and pretends to give up particles under pressure with 280 grade sandpaper.

What this means is you are going to spend a lot of time carving away molding lines, sanding her legs and arms smooth, and getting rid of excess vinyl blemishes on the back of her head/hair. What this also means is that you will love the results, because this vinyl looks very clean and very lifelike. Lum, in this form, is quite leggy but nicely proportioned, and the original sculptor has done the female body justice.

Lum's face is an area of special concern, and I suppose that this applies to other anime-based models, both male and female. It is not the world's easiest task to translate the simplified face art in cels to a 3-D solid, and there are some angles on this Lum face that are not especially flattering, but luckily they are in the minority. The eyes had been molded with lines defining the lids and irises; these I sanded smooth and filled with Squadron green putty, since I wanted to define the eyes only with paint. I was able to capture some stills from the beginning of the '87 OAV, which featured some of the best "maturing" Lum faces ever, and painted her eyes to match.

Her nose is quite tiny in the model, and might be sanded down too far if one isn't careful. The nose, as well as the mouth, are fine and required no modifications. As for her ears, I think they stick out a bit too much, but otherwise these too look fine. Her two forward-falling hair pieces needed just a tad of trimming to fit just ahead of the ears and look natural. Her horns are meant to fit in indentations in the mass of back hair, but I filled the indents with putty as they were too far back, and the horns were trimmed a little to better fit in the fold where they belong.

The hardest work by far involved smoothing her skin and creating

smooth joins for her arms and legs. Every time I thought I was done, I would notice a little depression that needed a little smear of putty and sanding. Again, this attention to the look will help with similar figures. In Lum's case, she deserves it. One small example of almost overdoing it was in the hands, where I got in with a small file and the X-acto knife to clean up the fingers so they didn't appear to be a solid lump.

Once shaped and sanded to my satisfaction, I fired up the airbrush with "Aqueous Hobby Color", a water-based acrylic paint from Gunze Sangyo. The nine colors I used were: light blue, dark blue, white, light tan, pink, flat red, green (#46 was PERFECT hair color), yellow orange, and brown. In different mixtures, I was able to get all the needed shades. I was able to cut very small masks from drafting tape to get her eyes the same size; even slight differences can make a face look out of balance.

For a first effort in vinyl, I'm real happy with the results; thanks again, Ray. I realized even before writing this review that it might be futile raving about a product that was near-impossible to find, but again, there are other anime kits out there, and the general model-making tips still apply. Keep looking; you might ask around (like the old song): "Are there any more at home like you?"

- Rick Sternbach

//////////////////////////////////MAIL ORDER INFO\\

Well, it's been a year since the special mail order services issue of ANIME STUFF 4. Since then circumstances have forced the ANIME STUFF staff to seek out new sources for anime goods. Fortunately outlets for anime goods have grown in the past year, and we have found a couple of new, excellent, and professional sources for anime goods.

Also, since the mail order situation can be quite volatile, we will be using this MAIL ORDER INFO section to present any news and comments on the subject of mail ordering and importing anime goods.

WOK TALK/SIGHT & SOUND (FORMERLY THE INSTANT REPLAY)

For the best mail order service in domestic and import LaserDiscs, the folks at WOK TALK/SIGHT & SOUND can't be beat. I have been ordering laserdiscs from these folks for the past few years now, and I recommend them highly. They are truly a professionally run business, featuring

fast and courteous service. Orders are shipped quickly, and backorders are carefully tracked. Unlike some places, I have never had them lose a backorder, or ship the wrong disc.

Over the past year, due to new management, they have stepped up their selection of imported Japanese discs and special order capabilities. This is a dream come true for us anime fans! And their services offer many features that other sources don't offer.

First of all, they will place an order for any disc from Japan as long as you can provide the title of the disc, and most importantly, the disc's catalog number. (Keep those anime magazines!) Another feature, and the nicest of any anime LD sources, is that they take credit card orders and don't charge to your account until the disc comes in. This is really nice, because if they can't find the disc you want, you don't have to worry about getting a credit or a refund. And their prices for discs are kept very close to the current Yen to Dollar exchange rate. Plus, discs are shipped in your choice of UPS services and packed in sturdy LP mailers.

Again, if you looking for a reliable LD import service, give these nice folks a try. I have really been satisfied with their services. Be sure and get copies of their domestic and import catalogs.

And one more feature: They publish a neat monthly newsletter called LASER FLASH that provides info on new discs and in-stock listings. And they now have a storefront that you can visit if you are near their area.

You can contact them at...

WOK TALK INC. DBA
SIGHT & SOUND
1275 MAIN STREET
WALTHAM, MA 02154

Phone: 1-617-894-8633 or 1-617-894-8634

NIKAKU ANIMART:

Another new place that we have only just started to deal with is NIKAKU ANIMART. These folks seem to sell a bit of everything _except_ video! (Although they have just started to experiment with LaserDiscs...) Anyway, they feature anime Books, Magazines, Manga, Compact Discs, Audio Tapes, Posters, and other anime goods. Like Wok Talk, they also take credit card orders, but checks and money orders are fine too.

These folks really seem to want our business, as they sent out our copies of their catalog in a flash! I got mine in just a couple of days.

Here is where they can be contacted...

NIKAKU ANIMART
615 North 6th. St.
SAN JOSE, Ca 95112

Phone: 1-408-971-2822

PATRICK MINYARD'S AMAZING ANIME T-SHIRTS:

Forum member Patrick Minyard makes the most amazing anime T-shirts! Custom airbrushed wonders! He is good, damn good. I've always wanted a T-shirt with a graphic from some my favorite anime shows, but the price for 2 or 4 color anime T-shirt from Japan are a bit steep running at about \$35 to \$50 a shot from some places. And sometimes they feature really dumb graphics too! Well, Patrick has a cure...send him an anime graphic, and he will paint it on a shirt with an airbrush for \$25 to \$50 depending on how complex the graphic you want done is.

Believe me, this is great! His prices are competitive with imported shirts, but his are in full color! As many colors as it takes! And not only that, but your shirt is a one-of-a-kind work of handpainted art! I was really impressed...he made me a Dirty Pair movie T-Shirt. The colors! The resolution! Cell quality art! Wow!!

If you have been wanting something like this, Patrick is the man to contact. Here is his address...write him...he might even have a few already done for you to check out...

PATRICK MINYARD
ALL-STATE PLASTICS
15352 E. Proctor Ave.
City of Industry, CA 91744

Hey, I haven't asked him, but I'm sure he could probably work on other articles of clothing. Or maybe your car! Yeah, that's an idea! Let him work on your car! Have it done in tiger-stripes with pictures of Lum all over it! (Sorry, I lost myself there...) But, hey...give him enough money to buy a Urusei Yatsura 50 Laserdisc Boxed Set, and I'm sure he'll paint anything you want! (grin)

- Tom Mitchell

[illegible]

PLANS FOR SECOND MACROSS MOVIE STALLED...

Tatsunoko Productions is having problems getting support for its new MACROSS movie project. It seems folks are not interested in backing the film if many of the original creators of the TV series and first movie can't be involved. All of the people who worked on MACROSS are working on other projects.

SONY HELPS BUILD "ROUTE 20: GALACTIC AIRPORT"

Gainax will receive funding from SONY to produce its next large scale anime film ROUTE 20: GALACTIC AIRPORT. This production is expected to rival or surpass their popular WING OF HONNEAMISE in quality. If you have access to ANIMAG 3, be sure and read the article on this project. This will be an important anime film, at the very least.

[illegible]

Rick Sternbach didn't like Pop*Chaser as much as I did, but then there's no accounting for Rick having good taste. (grin)

-Tom Mitchell

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